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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: THE SRI LANKAN CRISIS, PAKISTAN,
US FIRST LADY AT G-20 SUMMIT; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media
reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press.
The Mission reports on English-language media via email
through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

THE SRI LANKAN CRISIS

1. "CRISIS STILL CONTINUES" editorial in April 23 Kolkata
Bengali independent ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA. "The Manmohan
Singh government is silent about the sufferings of the
Tamils in Sri Lanka. While it considers the LTTE
terrorists, it doesn't like to meddle in the internal
affairs of its next-door neighbor. The war will end
eventually, but the issue of self-rule for Sri Lankan
Tamils will remain unresolved. But since New Delhi has
washed its hands of the situation, nationalist forces in
Sri Lanka will feel no pressure to extend justice to the
Tamils."

2. "LET DELHI BE VOCAL," editorial in April 23 pro-Left
Kolkata Bengali SAMBAD PRATIDIN. "India right now is
concerned about the Tamil-speaking people whose life is
threatened by the war, but it is not possible for India
to do anything for diplomatic and other reasons. It is
also not possible to support Pravakaran; this needs to be
understood because India, facing the worst form of
terrorism, is now engaged in a diplomatic war with its
western neighbor. At the national level, the biggest
concern is controlling Tamil emotions. Caution must

exercised in the event of any incident that could lead to an emotional upsurge. It is hoped that the Indian government will take suitable measures to prevent this."

PAKISTAN

¶3. "THEIR DEMOCRACY," editorial in April 22 nationalist RASHTRIYA SAHARA Hindi daily: "Extremist forces want to completely 'Islamize' Pakistan. They are buoyed by the Pakistan government's capitulation to the Taliban in Swat. Red Mosque leader Maulana Abdul Aziz called for an Islamic takeover of Pakistan; now the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Sharia Muhammadi chief Sufi Muhammad of Swat has done the same. He even declared democracy and courts un-Islamic. There are demands for the imposition of Islamic rule across the Malakand division. After Swat, now it is Malakand's turn, and then perhaps all of Pakistan. The Pakistan government's helplessness is extremely worrisome, but there is still time for the Pakistani politicians to sit up and do something."

¶4. "OUR JOINT WAR AGAINST TERRORISM," op-ed in April 22 centrist DAINIK BHASKAR Hindi daily: "The Taliban threat in Pakistan is steadily rising. Pakistan is today in danger of being devoured by the monster it created to meet U.S. needs. Pakistan is completely dependent on the U.S., as its own economy has collapsed. Its army wants close relations with the U.S. in order to maintain its

NEW DELHI 00000809 002 OF 003

upper hand in the society. The army's role cannot be reduced unless the elected government is strengthened... the people and the politicians of Pakistan actually believe that jihadi terrorism is no less dangerous for Pakistan than it is for India. They feel Pakistan needs India's help to deal with terrorist organizations. A strong central democratic government in Pakistan is good for India's security too. India should face this danger jointly with Pakistan."

¶5. "WHAT IS HAPPENING IN PAKISTAN," editorial in the April 22 right-of-center Urdu daily HAMARA SAMAJ, New Delhi: "Pakistan is an independent and self-governing country. We, the Indians do not poke our nose in its internal matters, nor have we any right to do so. But the scenario changes altogether when they talk of Shariah (Islamic Laws). India is affected when Pakistan burns in the fires of terrorism, but those acts of terrorism and extremism provide America with opportunities to intervene in the internal affairs of Pakistan. A strong, consolidated and democratic Pakistan is always in the best interest of India. On the other hand, the strategic significance of Pakistan is well-accepted. Zardari has been proved to be a failed and dumbfounded President of Pakistan. When he will wake up is hard to say. The current drama of agreements with the Taliban could destroy the country, and the United States of America is awaiting such an opportunity."

¶6. "PAKISTAN AND TALIBAN: OUR MEDIA," editorial in the April 22 right-of-center Urdu daily MUNSIF, Hyderabad: "Pakistan is reeling these days, and there is no doubt it is the target of a war initiated by former US president Bush against Islam in the name of a war on terrorism. It has long been clear that after Afghanistan and Iraq, America's next target will be Pakistan. That's why America is bombarding the tribal areas of Pakistan, and has already started a campaign to malign Islam and its followers by branding them as 'Taliban' or 'Al-Qaeda'. America and its allies are determined to make the situation in Pakistan explosive. Only God knows how many people in the Pakistan government are part of this contemptible mission."

US FIRST LADY AT G-20 SUMMIT

17. "MICHELLE OBAMA AND QUEEN ELIZABETH'S EMBRACE: US FIRST LADY EXTENDS HERSELF WELL" op-ed article by columnist Amarendra Dhaneshwar in the April 23 left-of-center Marathi daily MAHANAGAR. "Some may not have taken U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama and Queen Elizabeth's embrace in the right spirit. Royal etiquette dictates that the Queen not be touched unless she reaches out first. And the U.S. First Lady not only touched her but patted the Queen on her back. Whatever the demands of protocol may be, the U.S. First lady did the right thing at the right moment, and without undue extravagance. Michelle Obama's gesture speaks of a certain openness. As some columnists have already pointed out, she has

NEW DELHI 00000809 003 OF 003

destroyed all manner of cultural untouchabilities and ideological belief systems that create divides between equal people of this world..."
BURLEIGH